

CLAIMS

1. A system for use with a database application operating on a code device communicating with other code devices via a network, comprising:
a table of fields, including:
 - a task identification field to provide a unique identification number associated with an open item;
 - personnel identification fields to identify personnel involved in the task, including at least an originator of the task;
 - a text field to provide comments regarding the task; and
 - a status field to indicate a current status of the task, said status field including a status indicating closure of the task, said closure status being access restricted to said personnel other than the originator;a graphical user interface routine to create a graphical user interface by the other code devices and including in the interface windows corresponding to the task identification, personnel identification, text, and status fields in the table; and
a notification engine to automatically notify at least one personnel other than the originator when the task is created and at least the originator when the status of the task is altered thereafter.
2. A system according to claim 1, wherein:
the notification engine further notifies the originator when the status of the task is moved to a provisional completion status by personnel other than the originator; and
wherein the system thereafter mandates that the originator select either the closure status or another status, and wherein when any status other than the closure status is

selected, the notification engine further notifies at least one of the personnel other than the originator that the status of the task has been rejected for closure.

3. The system according to claim 2, further including:

a report engine providing reports identifying a rate at which personnel were identified by the personnel identification fields on tasks that received a timely closure status by the originator.

4. A system for representing in a relational manner data associated with open business tasks, comprising:

a data receiving routine for recording information from task originators reflecting newly entered business tasks;

a data compilation routine to coordinate preparation of data tables including:

(a) a task table comprising unique identifiers for newly opened business tasks recorded into the data receiving routine, the task table keying each unique identifier to at least three fields comprising:

an identification of an associated task originator,

an identification of a responsible group for performing the task, and

a textual description of the newly opened business task; and

(b) a history table also with the same unique identifiers for corresponding newly opened business tasks, the history table keying each unique identifier to at least two fields comprising: an identification of a latest status of a task, and a textual description of actions taken with respect to a task; and

wherein the status field is modification-precluded for said responsible group.

5. A system according to claim 1 further including a feedback software routine to prompt the task originators to approve and close business tasks that they had originated.
6. A system according to claim 1 wherein the status field is modification-enabled only to the originator and system administrators.
7. A system according to claim 1 further including a network access software routine to interface the data receiving system with a network.
8. An network application for processing tasks through a business environment via a network, the network application operating in conjunction with a database application, comprising:
 - a database interface to coordinate by a graphical user interface the creation of a table having relational fields including:
 - a unique task identifier field to contain a database-defined unique identifier for each task entered into the database;
 - an origination field to contain a unique identifier for an originator of said task;
 - a statement of task field to contain a textual statement corresponding to said task;
 - a responsible entity field to contain a unique identifier for an entity responsible for said task;
 - said unique task identifier field keyed to said originator field, said statement of task field, and said responsible entity field;
 - a module to interface selected database information to a network; and
 - a notification engine to automatically create a notification to the responsible entity via the module and the network of the creation of a task keyed to the responsible

entity in the responsible entity field, and to automatically create a notification to the originator via the module and the network of the completion of the task by the responsible entity.

9. A network application according to claim 8, further including a search engine tied to the table to provide searchable entries for currently open tasks, for a given originator.

10. A network application according to claim 8, wherein the origination field includes:

an originator field to contain a unique identifier for an originator of said task; and
an originator group field automatically identifying, based on said originator field, a supervisor of a workgroup including the originator of said task;

the table further including:

a statement of task field to contain a textual statement corresponding to said task; and

a responsible entity field to contain a unique identifier for an entity responsible for said task;

said unique task identifier field keyed to said originator field, said statement of task field, and said responsible entity field.

11. A network application according to claim 9, wherein the notification engine creates (1) a first graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the supervisor via the module whenever an originator creates a

new task, said first graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to approve, modify, or reject the new task; (2) unless the supervisor rejects the new task, a second graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the entity responsible for the new task via the module, said second graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to report on status and progress of said new task.

12. A system according to claim 8 wherein the database further includes a second table containing administrative information to automatically populate the originator field, originator group field, and responsible entity field based on predefined selection options.
13. A system according to claim 8 wherein:
the database table further includes a priority field to identify a priority level of said task, and a due date field to identify a due data associated with the task; and wherein the notification engine further provides an automatic email notification to the originator at a set time relative to the due date.
14. A system according to claim 8 wherein the database table further includes a responsible subgroup identification field and an originating subgroup identification field to identify, respectively, a subgroup within the workgroup including the originator.
15. A system according to claim 14 wherein:

the notification engine further creates a third graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to a supervisor of the originating subgroup via the software module, said third graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to approve, modify, or reject the new task; and a fourth graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the responsible subgroup via the software module, said fourth graphical user interface further including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to report on a status and progress of said new task.

16. A method of processing tasks through a business environment, comprising:
presenting a first graphical user interface supported by a database of fields, the first graphical user interface including information fields including:
 - a unique identifier field automatically assigning from the database an identifier for a new task that is unique from all identifiers of all other tasks;
 - an originator field to contain a unique identifier for an originator of said task;
 - an originator group field automatically identifying, based on said originator field, a supervisor of a workgroup including the originator of said task;
 - a statement of task field to contain a textual statement corresponding to said task;

a responsible entity field to contain a unique identifier for an entity responsible for said task;

said unique task identifier field keyed to said originator field, said statement of task field, and said responsible entity field; and

notifying the supervisors via a first graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the supervisor whenever an originator creates a new task, said first graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to approve, modify, or reject the new task, and, unless the supervisor rejects the new task, notifying the entity responsible for the new task via a second graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the entity responsible for the new task, said second graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to report on status and progress of said new task.

17. A system according to claim 16 wherein the database further includes a second table containing administrative information to automatically populate the originator field, originator group field, and responsible entity field based on predefined selection options.

18. A system according to claim 16 wherein:

the database table further includes a priority field to identify a priority level of said task, and a due date field to identify a due data associated with the task; and

wherein the notification engine further provides an automatic email notification to the originator at a set time relative to the due date.

19. A system according to claim 16 wherein the database table further includes a responsible subgroup identification field and an originating subgroup identification field to identify, respectively, a subgroup within the workgroup including the originator.
20. A system according to claim 19 wherein:
the notification engine further creates a third graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to a supervisor of the originating subgroup via the software module, said third graphical user interface including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to approve, modify, or reject the new task; and a fourth graphical user interface automatically created and communicated to the responsible subgroup via the software module, said fourth graphical user interface further including said relational fields corresponding to the new task and tools to report on a status and progress of said new task.